

Friday, November 9, 2001, 8 p.m.
Walter Hall

CD 2001--110/111

University of Toronto
Faculty of Music

Presents

University of Toronto Chamber Orchestra

Raffi Armenian, conductor

William Aide, piano

R.E. EDWARDS CHAIR IN PIANO PERFORMANCE

PROGRAMME

Christoph Willibald Gluck
1714-1787

Overture to *Iphigenia in Aulis*

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
1756-1791

Piano Concerto No. 27
in B-flat Major K595
Allegro
Larghetto
Allegro

INTERMISSION

Franz Josef Haydn
1732-1809

Symphony No. 104 "London"
Adagio-Allegro
Andante
Menuetto-Allegro
Allegro spirituosso

Tonight's programme is performed on the Edith McConica Steinway.

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Programme Notes

by ALEX CARPENTER

Iphigenia in Aulis (Overture)

CHRISTOPH WILLIBALD GLUCK

Born in Erasbach, 1714

Died in Vienna, 1787

Gluck, a German composer who lived and worked in Prague, Vienna, and Paris, is best remembered as an opera composer and an avid reformer of serious opera in the eighteenth century. Among his more significant reforms were an insistence on melodic clarity and simplicity over "useless embellishment," a revival of the importance of the drama in opera, and the use of the opera overture as a true prologue to the dramatic action.

Gluck's *Iphigenia in Aulis* [Iphigénie en Aulide] is a "Tragédie-opéra" in three acts. It was composed ca. 1771-73, with a libretto by Marie François Louis Gand Leblanc du Roullet after Racine's *Iphigénie* of 1674. This opera was Gluck's first French reform opera after several successful Italian reform operas and marks the beginning of the so-called Gluck era in France. The overture accords with Gluck's reforms as it not only attempts to represent musically the dramatic themes of the opera, but also contains musical material borrowed directly from the opera itself. This overture is considered one of Gluck's finest, and features flexible form and vividly contrasting thematic ideas.

Piano Concerto No.27

in B-flat Major K595

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Born in Salzburg, 1756

Died in Vienna, 1791

This work was Mozart's last piano concerto, and was completed in January of the final year of his life. He premiered the work himself in March of 1791 at a concert of clarinetist Joseph Bähr. Scholars have noted the irony of the location of this performance, a concert hall in the Himmelfortgasse or "Gate-of-Heaven-Road," suggesting that Mozart's last piano concerto indeed marks the beginning of the end and as such stands "at the gate of eternity."

This work, however, was not Mozart's last piece of music by any means, only his last major keyboard work.

The Piano Concerto No.27 is, in many ways, a work born out of misery and depression: the two years preceding Mozart's last were unsuccessful and frustrating for the composer, and in the concerto one can hear a certain resignation. The work also has moments of great joy, however, and exemplifies Mozart's adroitness with the concerto genre: the solo and tutti parts are in a very close relationship, interacting seamlessly from beginning to end, and rich harmonies and imaginative melodies blossom in each movement. The concerto is cast in typical three-movement form: Allegro; Larghetto; and a final Allegro in rondo form.

Symphony No.104 "London"

FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN

Born in Rohrau, 1732

Died in Vienna, 1809

Haydn composed twelve symphonies during his London years. Soon after being freed from service to the princes of Esterhazy, Haydn travelled to Vienna to live and work as a freelance composer. He soon met the violinist and concert promoter Johann Peter Solomon, who commissioned a number of symphonies, an opera, and other works from Haydn. Encouraged by Solomon's enthusiasm for his music, Haydn left Vienna for London at the end of 1790, and stayed there for nearly two years. He returned to London again in 1794, and may have been planning to live there permanently; however, Haydn was recalled to Esterhazy later that year and so was only able to stay in London until the summer of 1795.

Though it is one of the twelve "London Symphonies", No.104 is the only one to which the nickname "London" has stuck. This is perhaps due to the work's uniqueness: in some respects, it is an unusually dark, pensive, and poetic work, uncharacteristic of the other Haydn symphonies of this period. It is also certainly an example of Haydn at the peak of his maturity as a composer. The Symphony was composed during Haydn's second visit to

London, and is cast in four movements: Adagio-Allegro; Andante; Menuetto-Allegro; and Allegro spiritoso.

It begins in a minor key, D minor, though the symphony is actually in D major. After the slow D minor introduction, the Allegro that follows is energetic yet also somehow subdued. The slow second movement, Andante, features some unusual modulations to remote keys and

ornamental melodies. The Minuet, as Robert Maycock has pointed out, is also a bit out of the ordinary, with "thrilling drum-rolls" juxtaposed with "chromatic sighs" from the woodwinds. The finale, Allegro, is sprightly and cheerful, though perhaps less so than some of Haydn's other late symphonies. In all, the "London" Symphony is an emotionally and musically complex work.

Meet the Artists

In 1962, twenty year old **Raffi Armenian** graduated from the piano performance class of Bruno Seidlhofer at the Academy of Music, Vienna, Austria. In 1965, he graduated from Imperial College, University of London, England in Metallurgy. Going back to music and Vienna, he completed studies at the Vienna Academy of Music in Orchestral Conducting (Hans Swarowsky 1968), Choral Conducting (Rheinhold Schmid 1969) and Composition (Alfred Uhl 1969). Further he took private voice lessons with Ferdinand Grossmann.

In 1969 he emigrated to Canada, where he became Artistic Director of the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony (1971-1993). The Raffi Armenian Theatre in Kitchener, which he helped to design, is considered one of the best performance spaces in North America, both for its acoustics and its design features. In 1974, he founded the Canadian Chamber Ensemble, which achieved International recognition with tours in North and South America, and Europe.

Raffi Armenian has guest conducted all of the major orchestras in Canada, as well as in Belgium, Italy, the USA, and the Jeunesses Musicales World Youth Orchestra. Equally at home on the operatic podium, he has conducted performances in Toronto, Montreal, Detroit, Columbus (Ohio) and Indiana, in a vast repertoire, including several works of the twentieth century such as *Wozzeck* and *Rake's Progress*. From 1982 to 1985 he was Artistic Director of the Opera Studio of L'Opéra de Montréal. In 1989, he conducted the final public appearance of the great Canadian tenor Jon Vickers, in a concert performance of Wagner's *Parsifal*.

Mr. Armenian's work has received countless honors including the Canadian Grand Prix du Disque for *Serenades*, one of twenty-eight CD's he has recorded, and an Emmy Award nomination (New York) for the TV performance of Menotti's *The Medium* starring Maureen

Forrester. Woody Allen used his CD *Music from Berlin in the 1920's* as background music for his film "Shadows and Fog." In 1985 he received an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Waterloo (Ontario, Canada), in 1989 he was honored with membership in the Order of Canada, and in 1991 he received an Honorary Doctorate from Wilfrid Laurier University.

Raffi Armenian has long been active as a pedagogue. In 1982 he became a professor of the Orchestral Conducting Class at the Conservatoire de Musique (Montreal), a position he continues to hold. In 1997 he accepted a two-year post as Visiting Guest Professor at the Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst, in Graz Austria, and in September 1999 Maestro Armenian became Director of Orchestral Studies at the University of Toronto Faculty of Music.

The 1999-2000 season marked a return to regular operatic conducting, beginning with his debut at Fresno International Grand Opera, for whom he conducted *Il Trovatore*. The season also held guest conducting engagements with Les Violons du Roy (Quebec City), and a return to the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Orchestra in May.

The 2000-2001 season began with a concert for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's Radio Music - Toronto in a programme featuring the chamber versions of the Great Vocal / Orchestral works of Gustav Mahler, with renowned Canadian soprano Edith Wiens. He also returned to the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Orchestra for their October Beethoven Festival, in addition to conducting performances of *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and *Rigoletto* at the Fresno International Grand Opera.

The 2001-2002 season begins with performances of *Anoush*, by Arman Tigranyan - an Eastern Armenian folk tradition based opera - in a production at Michigan Opera Theatre (De-

troit). Among other guest conducting engagements are performances with the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Orchestra, Victoria Symphony Orchestra and a production of *La Traviata* with the Fresno International Grand Opera in the spring of 2002.

Pianist **William Aide** received his musical degrees from the University of Toronto and the Juilliard School. In 1962 he won first prize in the CBC Talent Festival and the Canada Council Award for Young Performing Artists. Mr. Aide is a distinguished solo recitalist, chamber musician and accompanist and has collaborated with such conductors as Walter Susskind, Charles Dutoit, Mario Bernardi, Raffi Armenian, Arthur Fiedler and Andrew Davis. Glenn Gould referred to him as "one of the most inventive and imaginative pianistic talents of our time".

William Aide has recorded the Chopin Twenty-Four Etudes, the Brahms Cello Sonatas with Ofra Harnoy, and has performed the complete Suzuki method repertoire on a five compact disc set. The BBC and CBC have recorded his performances and he has given concerts in New York City, the former Soviet Union, Chicago, San Francisco and throughout

Canada. In February 1993, and November 1995, Mr. Aide served as Artist-in-Residence at the Aix-en-Provence Conservatory. A glowing review stated that "one could detect two major strengths from his playing: the extreme quality of his sonority and the sovereign mastery of musical time."

Recent engagements include acclaimed performances at the American Liszt Society conferences in Hamilton, and a song recital with mezzo soprano Catherine Robbin. His most recent recording of Canadian chamber music features works by Talivaldis Kenins (Centrediscs).

His book, *Starting from Porcupine* (Oberon Press), was shortlisted for the Edna Stabler Award for creative non-fiction. In June of 2000 he participated in the first jury of the Esther Honens Competition.

A CBC compact disc recording of his 1978 live recording with Lois Marshall of three Schumann song cycles was issued in August 2000.

A university teacher of 38 years experience, William Aide came to the Faculty of Music in 1978. He is the first holder of the R.E. Edwards Chair in Piano Performance and currently serves as the Head of the Keyboard Division.

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

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